

The Cursed Springs

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Summary: CD. When Inuyasha and Sesshomaru, chasing after Naraku, fall into one of the cursed springs of Jusenkyo and turn into girls, one would expect them to be shocked, confused and behave erratically. They don't. But everyone else does. -A story told in short chapters.-

1. Take off to China

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****Note: This story is a parody written for the sake of criticizing and breaking with the tropes and themes commonly found in male to female genderswap and mpreg fics. That is to say, the swapped characters will NOT act feminine just because they have changed sex, and they will NOT let their entire lives and emotions suddenly be dictated by the pregnancy, nor will babies make everything better.****

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><p>The first rumors of a newly risen Naraku having crossed the sea reached their ears ten days ago.<p>

It was by coincidence that Sesshomaru had crossed paths with Inuyasha's little mismatched group while they had been setting up a joined camp with Koga and his pack. The animosity between the two brothers had at this point already waned to such an extent, that Sesshomaru merely offered a few disdainful comments, and Inuyasha returned them with some halfhearted threats.

And then Kagura had dropped by.

Naturally, Koga had gotten up to his feet, ready to get revenge for the death of his pack members.

It was only with the combined efforts of Kagome and Inuyasha that he was restrained long enough for Kagura to inform them of Naraku's whereabouts. As she flew off, Koga broke one arm free of Kagome's grasp and used it to hit Inuyasha in his head.

"Why the hell did you stop me from killing her."

"She's forced to work under Naraku, ya dumbass!" Inuyasha yelled back, rubbing the sore spot on his head. "She wants to be free, but she has no choice!"

"You think I care? She killed my pack!"

"And your pack killed Rin," Sesshomaru interrupted smoothly. It became deadly silent in the camp after that declaration. Sesshomaru gave the gathered lot a dismissive look, then turned around. "I care not what you do, but don't get in this Sesshomaru's way."

Of course, the only course of action that he would choose was pursuit. It was the only acceptable course of action. So, he sent Jaken with Rin and Ah-Un back to the Western Fortress, while he himself went off to the Middle Kingdom.

When Sesshomaru had departed, Kagome flew off the handle at Koga for what had happened to Rin. Koga apologized profusely and then, with the excuse of chasing Naraku, turned tail and fled for China.

The mismatched pack was last to leave, after debating the truthfulness of Kagura's information.

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><p>TBC...

2. Jusenkyo

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Reply to Guest: You must never have seen the anime Ranma $\frac{1}{2}$ or read the manga. The poor spelling/grammar/etc. is done intentionally to reflect the Jusenkyo guide's poor grasp of the language. So, sorry if you didn't like it, but I'm not going to change that.

* * *

><p>"It should be around these springs," said Inuyasha. "Sesshomaru's already here though, I can smell him."<p>

Ten days since receiving the news from Kagura, they had arrived in China. Sesshomaru had been the first to arrive. Inuyasha's pack had been next; Sango and Miroku had flown on Kirara's back, while Inuyasha held onto the scruff of her neck, and Kagome had traveled on a transformed Shippo. Koga's group, unable to fly across the sea, had fallen behind.

"Welcome to Jusenkyo," said a male voice with a heavy accent.

The group turned to find an unassuming human male standing behind them.

"Who are you?" Inuyasha demanded suspiciously.

"I guide of Jusenkyo," the man replied in broken Japanese. "Is legendary training ground of Bayankala Mountain, but many sad story happen here."

"A training ground, huh?" Inuyasha looked at the many bamboo poles erected across the field and spotted Sesshomaru standing on one at the far end.

Following Inuyasha's line of sight, the Jusenkyo guide commented, "I warn not-"

But Inuyasha had stopped listening to the man and jumped onto another pole. "Bastard!" he called out, grabbing the daiyokai's attention before charging ahead.

"So, what were you trying to warn our friend of, sir?" Miroku asked, turning his attention to the guide.

"I try warn Lord not go to spring, but he not listen!" the man exclaimed in exasperation, "I try warn your friend, but he also not listen! Why no one listen!?"

"What's wrong with the springs, mister?" Kagome asked curiously.

The guide shook his head and sighed. "Many sad story happen," he repeated. "Over there, pig drown in water and now spring is cursed. There, panda drown in water and die, now spring cursed. There Yeti riding bull holding crane in one hand and eel in other drown in water and now is cursed spring. And there," he said pointing in the direction of Sesshomaru and Inuyasha, "very sad story of girl drowning in spring, now cursed."

"What kind of curse are we talking about?" Sango asked.

In that moment, Naraku appeared and attacked, pushing the two brothers head first into the spring.

"Now, whoever fall into spring become girl," said the guide.

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><p>TBC...

3. The change

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><p>With a sputter, Inuyasha came back up. "Shit," he cursed, coughing up some water and wiping the hair from his vision.<p>

He was quite annoyed when beside him, Sesshomaru arose from the water

with much more grace.

"You will pay for this," Sesshomaru growled, glaring at a smug Naraku.

Inuyasha blinked. Was that the water in his ears, or did Sesshomaru's voice sound a few octaves higher?

But his ears had not been deceiving him. As soon as the words had left his mouth, Sesshomaru's eyes widened in surprise and his hand went up to grasp at his throat.

"Ha," Naraku said with a smirk. "You fell for my trap."

"Trap?" Inuyasha repeated, then blinked as he noticed the change in his own voice.

"I led you to these cursed springs and you fell into them. This one is the Spring of the Drowned Girl; it turns whoever falls into it into a woman."

The looks on the brothers' faces darkened at those words. Inuyasha reached up to grab at his chest... but it was flat. There was no sign of any breasts. He looked into the water for his reflection, but it was the same as ever.

The only sign of change he had noticed so far was his voice.

There was only one way to reach a satisfying answer in this. With a scowl of determination he reached down into his hakama for his manhood.

But it was gone...

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><p>TBC...

4. Naraku's plan

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Note: Bakuseiga isn't yet present in this story, considering that Kagura is still alive.

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><p>"Fuck..."<p>

The strangled word drew Sesshomaru's attention towards his brother, whose panicked expression confirmed his fears. The spider half-breed wasn't lying.

"You've become a little bitch now, Sesshomaru," Naraku gloated. "How does it feel to lose your manhood? To become weak and helpless? To lose your claim to the title of Lord of the Western Lands?"

"You think I've become powerless, because I've lost my manhood?"

Sesshomaru said with cold disdain.

"I know you are." Naraku smirked. "And I can't wait until next month, when mating season starts. You will be a submissive little bitch, ripe for the picking."

With a growl, Sesshomaru pulled out Tokijin and slashed through the spider half-breed's body, which fell apart to be revealed as one of Naraku's puppets. It felt not in the least satisfying.

"Is it true?"

Inuyasha.

Sesshomaru returned to face his - now her - brother - or rather, sister - who fidgeted slightly under her gaze.

"Not that I care, but are you really gonna lose your title?"

"The laws of our forefathers state that only a male heir may rule the Western Lands," Sesshomaru confirmed blandly. "However," and with this a tiny, chilling smile that Inuyasha had never seen the other sport before, appeared on the daiyokai's lips, "laws can be bend."

Sesshomaru returned the sword back to her hip and waded out of the water, Inuyasha on her heels.

"Hey, weren't you supposed to be this frigid bastard about rules and tradition!" she called after the daiyokai.

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><p>TBC...

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><p>ABOUT GENDER:

As someone who was raised bilingually (Dutch and Cantonese) I noticed how often gender plays a role in Germanic languages, such as Dutch and English. Things like gender-specific pronouns is something that Cantonese doesn't use (he/she, hij/zij is both translated as **ä½¢ or kÃ©uih in Yale romanization) and there is also no gender difference in roles of occupations, etc. either (actor/actress, acteur/actrice is both æ¼"å"ï or yÃ-n yÃ¹hn).**

So, when Sesshomaru and Inuyasha gained female bodies in this story, I was saddled with the problem of how to address them; the people around them see two women due to the lack of male equipment, but they still identify themselves as men. If it were Cantonese, I'd use kÃ©uih without any problem, yet English divides between he/she...

**In the end, I came to the decision to address the two as 'she'. By addressing the two as girls, the reader is forced to see them as girls (the same way that Inuyasha and Sesshomaru's friends are). Yet, because I refuse to feminize their behavior, the reader is also forced to rethink the differences between being female (sex) and acting feminine (gender), and to reconsider traditional/conservative

gender roles in the face of gender fluidity. This all would not be possible, if the reader thought of the Inu-brothers as boys, who exhibit in-character masculine behaviors, because that would be simple gender conformity.**

5. Female body

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><p>When the brothers, now sisters, had returned to the rest of the group, Shippo was the first to speak up. "Are they really cursed," he asked the guide, "because I don't see any difference."<p>

"Why would there be any difference, ya idiot," grumbled Inuyasha, and that was when the group noticed the first change.

"Your voice!" Kagome exclaimed.

"Little has been affected," Sesshomaru said blandly, as though he were... bored. "Even our scent is still masculine."

"It is?" Inuyasha questioned, sniffing the air around herself. "It is!" she confirmed.

"It must be the male hormones that haven't flushed out of the bodies yet," Kagome said. She was feeling rather upset about the situation. "I remember reading something back at home about hormone therapy for sex changes also taking time."

"Would that mean the changes to more feminine appearances would be gradual?" Sango speculated. "It would be better. We would have more time to make Inuyasha adapt."

"Adapt to what?" Inuyasha frowned.

"To being a woman," Sango replied.

Inuyasha snorted. "I'm fine as I am, no need to adapt." She waved the suggestion off, but she was unprepared for an angry Kagome.

"You're not fine! You're a girl now!" Her love interest had turned into a girl, and was making light of the problem! How was she supposed to date Inuyasha now?

But Inuyasha just rolled her eyes. "I'll find a way to reverse this, don't worry."

"B-but..." said Shippo, "Aren't you both supposed to be smaller and more slender like Kagome and Sango? And have wider eyes and rosy lips?"

"Not all women are small and slender, Shippo," Inuyasha huffed. "And since when are big eyes and rosy lips naturally feminine features? I think you've been deceived by the facial paint, runt."

"I've become smaller by half," Sesshomaru commented impassively.

The group turned to give her an incredulous look. Still towering over everyone else, she was just as tall as she had been when she was male.

But she continued, unperturbed. "In true form, female dog demons are half the size of males; my mother is slightly smaller than I was as a male, while I still fitted into my father's belly the last time I visited his grave... I believe my current size as a female would be equal to what I had been when I was half my current age; it will certainly have impacted my strength, but on the other hand I'll be more agile."

Inuyasha crossed her arms. "Right... anything else we need to know that will impact our chances against Naraku?" She looked around the group. "Any others comments?"

"Uhm..." said Miroku. There was a thoughtful look on his face, before he made a decision and knelt down in front of the two sisters. "Will either of you bear my child, please?"

And that was Sango's cue to knock him out.

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><p>TBC...

6. You need a bath!

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><p>When they returned to Japan, Sesshomaru left for Rin and Jaken, who were still at her fortress. The group had not run into Koga on their return; and Inuyasha figured that the mangy wolf had given up on reaching China, and was instead following a different lead on Naraku.<p>

Whatever. She was glad to be rid of the flea-bitten wolf.

"So, do we head south or back east?" Miroku asked.

Inuyasha tilted her nose up. "Let me sniff out Naraku's scent first."

"Naraku can wait," Kagome grumbled. "I badly need a bath..."

"Again?" Inuyasha complained, "But we had one two weeks ago!"

"Yes! _Two_ _weeks_ ago,_ Inuyasha!" Kagome cried in exasperation. "Do you have any idea how_ filthy_ I am? And you! You _stink_! You need a fricken bath!"

"I don't care that I stink when Naraku is still out there planning things, idiot!"

"Ah, ladies..." Miroku tried to soothe their bickering. "I'm sure there will be a nice spring or river on our ways where we can stop to refresh ourselves while we are looking for Naraku."

"Ugh, fine..." Inuyasha huffed. "I smelled a hot spring nearby, we can set up camp there."

"Great! Thank you, Inuyasha!"

Well, at least Kagome was not yelling anymore.

They headed to the springs and upon laying eyes on the steaming water, Kagome's mood improved even further.

"This is awesome!"

"Right," said Inuyasha, "you girls go ahead first. Miroku and I will take a dip after we set up camp."

Inuyasha felt her furry ears twitch when her friends stared at her as if she'd grown a second head.

"What?! Did I say something?"

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><p>TBC...

7. Join the girls

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><p>The stares were making the half-demon nervous. And why was Miroku wearing that sly look on his face? Was he planning some sort of prank on Inuyasha?<p>

"Well, we should not waste any time then," said Miroku. He grabbed Inuyasha by her hand. "Let's start a fire first, while the _girls_ are having their bath..."

Before the two could get very far, Hiraikotsu landed on the monk's head, knocking him out cold.

"Pervert," huffed Sango under her breath.

"Inuyasha, you can't bathe with Miroku! You're a girl now, remember?" Kagome scowled.

"Uhh..." Inuyasha twitched uncomfortably. "I kinda forgot."

Kagome slapped her hand over her forehead in exasperation. "Ugh, honestly..."

"Well," said Sango, "Miroku is not going to help set up camp anymore, so we might as well do it ourselves. Come on, Kagome, you can spread out the sleeping bags; I'll gather the wood for the fire; Kirara will

stand guard with Shippo; and Inuyasha, could you hunt something for us to eat?"

"Sure." Inuyasha nodded.

"Good. We can bathe after we've set up camp."

The pack set out to complete the tasks they had divided up amongst themselves. It didn't take long for Kagome to finish spreading out the sleeping bags, and soon she was off to help Sango gather wood. When Inuyasha returned with her kill, the two had already started a fire.

"Let's clean that boar out and put it over the fire," said Sango.

Soon enough the scent of roasting meat was wafting through their camp. Inuyasha licked her lips, her mouth already watering at the thought of food, as she stared contentedly into the fire.

"It's going to take a while before that's done," Sango commented. "Let's head for the springs."

"Ah, yes, a bath sounds heavenly!" Kagome exclaimed with a sigh.

They stood up, Kagome grabbing for her lavender scented soap from the future and Sango gathering the other necessary items, and then the two began to walk towards the springs with Shippo trotting after them.

It was Sango, who suddenly paused in her footsteps. "Inuyasha?" she asked.

"Wha-...?" Inuyasha gave her a lazy look, which Sango returned with one of her own, eyebrow raised in amusement.

"Aren't you going to join us?"

"WHAT!?"

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><p>TBC...

8. I still love you

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><p>Inuyasha refused to join the girls, slighting their feelings and causing a round of argument. Sango insisted that she join. What was the problem? Inuyasha was a girl now. But Inuyasha shook her head, arguing that she was still a man at heart. Sango retaliated that becoming a woman was something that needed to be learned, so of course Inuyasha would not feel feminine right away, but it would come to her, if only she stopped being so stubborn. Inuyasha reminded

Sango that this was not a permanent situation and that she would soon return to being male. Kagome was more ambivalent; after all, Inuyasha had been her love interest; but in the end she chose Sango's side.

"You need to learn that you are a girl now, Inuyasha. What happens when another situation like the one with Miroku comes up and you forget about your new body?"

"Then the guy will see me naked and I'll claw his eyes out."

"Inuyasha, I'm serious!"

"I am too, Kagome! Have you forgotten that I have _feelings_ for you?"

An awkward silence followed after that outburst.

It was not often that Inuyasha spoke of his feelings to Kagome, but when he did it was usually done when he was under the pressure of stress. It made Inuyasha's sudden confession all the more uncomfortable. It wasn't that Kagome did not care for Inuyasha anymore. She cared; she really did. But she was in love with Inuyasha-the-boy, not Inuyasha-the-girl. This female Inuyasha, she considered only her friend.

"I... I haven't forgotten, but I just thought..."

She wished that Inuyasha-the-girl was a different person from Inuyasha-the-boy. It would have been so much easier.

"You thought my feelings would be gone, because I'm a girl now? Well, you thought wrong. I can't join you in the hot springs, Kagome."

In the end, Inuyasha got her way. Sango and Kagome would bathe first, and then Inuyasha would go. Shippo decided to join Inuyasha, so he could "give pointers if Inuyasha does something decidedly unfeminine", as he put it. The last to go would be Miroku, if the man ever decided to wake up from his hiraikotsu-induced concussion.

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><p>TBC...

9. The results of a hot soak

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><p>The hot springs were a true welcome, even Inuyasha had to admit this. She had assumed that Shippo would prank her as soon as they entered the springs, but the little fox was surprisingly mild-mannered towards her that evening. Come to think of it, Shippo had been holding back ever since they had left China.<p>

The sudden realization made Inuyasha frown. Was the runt feeling

alright?

A rustling sound in the bushes caught her attention.

"Shippo, come here," she demanded, and for once the little fox listened to her without complaint.

She forced Shippo behind her, then pricked through her skin with her claws to draw blood. She prepared for the attack... there!

"Hijin Kesso!" she screamed, as she flung her blades of blood at the hidden demon to flush him out of the undergrowth. The demon, however, turned out to be Miroku.

"Ai!" the man yelled. One of Inuyasha's blades of blood had nicked his cheek.

"Miroku?" Inuyasha looked at the man in confusion. "What are you doing here? I thought you were out cold?"

"Oh, well... I..." Miroku shrugged sheepishly.

It was in that moment that realization dawned on Inuyasha. The expression on her face shifted from confusion to indignant incredulity to growing anger.

"Miroku... were you peeping at me?" she growled.

"To be honest, there isn't much to look at," Miroku said as he gave Inuyasha a once over and then rested his gaze on a certain point of her body.

Inuyasha frowned, following the monk's line of vision, and there, much to her surprise, was her - now his - manhood restored!

"I'm a man again!" he cried out in happiness.

"Well, I guess that means I can join you for a bath," said Miroku. He shucked off his kessa, followed by the rest of his outfit.

When Inuyasha, Miroku and Shippo returned to their camp to announce the good news to the girls, Inuyasha was met with congratulations from Sango and a relieved hug from Kagome.

The next morning, just as they were packing their bags to leave, rain drops fell from the sky.

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><p>Those who know their Ranma lore, should know what rain means for Inuyasha, hahaha!

TBC...

10. Sesshomaru takes to the sky

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><p>Sesshomaru knew when the masculine scent around her had worn off, when suddenly male demons left and right began throwing themselves in her path. She did not appreciate their attempts to woo her. Not in the slightest.<p>

"You should just give in and let me have you, little bitch," the latest one, a snake demon, hissed at her. "You know you want me inside you."

Sesshomaru did not even deign to answer the demon's lewd remarks, as she flicked her wrist, decapitating the snake's head with her whip. The body still moved around, even without the head, but Sesshomaru did not bother to continue fighting it and took off into the air.

Most demons could not fly and would not be able to follow her.

Sesshomaru finally understood why her mother lived in an empty floating palace up in the sky.

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><p>TBC...

11. Sesshomaru returns to Jaken and Rin

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><p>When Sesshomaru had returned to her Western Fortress the servants and soldiers she crossed paths with looked up in surprise and confusion. She ignored them all in favor of finding Rin, who was playing with a grumbling Jaken in her bedroom.<p>

"Lord Sesshomaru, you've returned!"

The happy girl jumped up and ran across the room to stop in front of her lord, and Sesshomaru was pleased to find that the child's reaction towards her had not changed at all.

"L-lord Sesshomaru! Your servant Jaken is so pleased with your return!"

Jaken's groveling had not changed either. Then again, his sense of smell had always been terrible.

Sesshomaru walked around Rin to stand directly in front of her retainer. Even _he _would not be able to miss the feminine scent when she was this close. "Jaken," she said, making sure the imp also heard the change in her voice.

It still took a good moment for Jaken to figure out what exactly had changed about his lord, but when realization finally dawned upon him, the poor imp passed out.

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><p>TBC...

12. Lady Sesshomaru

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><p>A splash of lukewarm tea over his head awoke Jaken. He looked up
blearily to find Rin giving him a concerned but curious
look.<p>

"W-wha...? I had the most strange dream, Rin," he said to
her.

"Jaken."

Jaken froze.

Sesshomaru's voice was... Cold. Dangerous. And several octaves higher
than it should be.

It had not been a dream. His lord... had somehow turned into a
woman.

"M-m-my lor-, uhh... my lady?"

A teapot connected soundly with his head.

"You will call me _lord_ Sesshomaru."

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><p>TBC...

13. Jaken matters

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><p>Sesshomaru could see the cogs turning in her retainer's head. The
moment Jaken had realized Sesshomaru was no longer male, the imp had
looked at her differently. It bothered Sesshomaru more than she let
on; for despite the bad treatment Jaken always received from her, the
imp was still someone who mattered. Sesshomaru would never have let
Jaken follow her around all this time or given him the Nintojo, if
she did not care for him in her own way.<p>

But no one would ever know this. She would slice off her remaining
arm before admitting to anyone just how much Jaken meant to her.

A warning glare crept into her eyes as her voice hardened.

"Are you trying to tell me that I am not worthy of the title?"

It was a threat: you dare to say 'yes' and I will cleave you in two. It worked.

"N-no, my lord," Jaken stuttered. He fell down to his knees, groveling before Sesshomaru. "Your unworthy servant would never dare claim such a thing! You are always worthy of the great noble position as Lord of the Western Lands. I-it's j-just that..."

"That...?"

"I noticed... your change..."

He was giving her that look again, Sesshomaru noticed grimly. Though, he was still properly groveling at her feet. The groveling was not something that Sesshomaru enjoyed, but at least it meant that Jaken did not mistakenly think of her as lesser.

"Are you aware what it means to be the Lady of the Western Lands?"

"Uhm..." Jaken chanced a glance up. "I-is it not the female equivalent of being a Lord, my lord?"

Sesshomaru shook her head. "It is not."

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><p>TBC...

14. Acknowledge my reign

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><p>"The Western Lady is always the mate of the Western Lord," Sesshomaru explained. "Her title is dependent of his, her rights and privileges derived from his station, and her duty only to him and his pups. Tell me, Jaken, is this Sesshomaru's worth dictated by the likes of another?"<p>

The only possible answer to that question was 'no'.

Not even her father, the Inu no Taisho, who had guided her at every turn of her life, and whom Sesshomaru held in the greatest of esteem, was allowed that kind of power over her life. Sesshomaru would never be ruled by another. A born leader, she ruled others.

Her subjects soon realized this as well. When word went out that Sesshomaru was now female, many a sceptic and opportunist challenged her reign. When they failed to pull through her abdication by rule of law, they tried to settle the score by sword, claws and teeth.

Sesshomaru dispatched of them all without breaking a single sweat.

As she ran the latest one, a powerful dog demon general and distant cousin, through with Tokijin, she declared to all who were there to witness:

"Those who dare question this Sesshomaru's worthiness to be the Western Lord come forth and face Tokijin."

They were forced, most reluctantly, to acknowledge her reign.

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><p>TBC...

15. Inuyasha reaches a boiling point

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><p>"Inuyasha, don't be silly and let us do your hair!"<p>

"Just leave my damn hair alone!"

It had been more than two weeks ago since Inuyasha had last been a man. She still did not know how she had been able to turn back into her male form that night, or why she reverted to her female one the following morning. It would not have bothered her overly much, if not for the fact that Sango and Kagome were continuously harassing her, telling her she needed to change herself.

It was all a pile of nonsense as far as Inuyasha was concerned. Whether male or female, she was still the same old Inuyasha. But the girls did not seem to share her sentiment; they wanted her to 'act more feminine', whatever the hell that meant.

The constant comments and arguments were enough to make Inuyasha, whose self-esteem had never been high to begin with, feel very insecure about herself. It made her defensive and snap at people.

Pack life had become almost unbearable with an irritable Inuyasha. It affected the moods of the others, who became more grumpy; and a grumpy Kagome meant being 'sat' more. That was the main reason why Inuyasha had decided to let her pack take a break at the nearest spring. To let them bathe and uncoil their pent up frustrations. The peace offering backfired spectacularly, however, when the girls decided to turn their attentions to her.

"Inuyasha, your hair becomes kinky when it's washed!" Kagome argued.

Sensing another round of nagging, Inuyasha forestalled her. "Look," she said, "I only brought you here because you like your baths. Granted, it's cold water, but still, you're nice and clean, and feeling better! Now, will you please give me a moment of peace? I

can't stand the constant criticizing of my looks, my behavior, and my person anymore! Leave me alone!"

Inuyasha ran off, away from her pack. But in her frustration, she had forgotten that mating season was about to descend upon them.

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><p>TBC...

16. Naraku makes his move

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><p>Her belly began to ache. At first, Inuyasha did not understand why, but then, as she felt something slick begin to trickle along her legs, she realized.<p>

"Damn it!" she swore.

Mating season. And she had left her pack. She was an idiot.

She was about to turn back, when a loud explosion caught her attention. Her pack would have heard it too; they would most certainly set out to investigate it.

Making a decision, Inuyasha headed for the sound of the explosion.

Inuyasha smelled the spider first: Naraku. She felt her throat vibrating as a growl began to form. His stench was spreading fast, which meant the half demon was fighting someone. The scent of Naraku's opponent was familiar, but the spider's miasma was interfering with Inuyasha's sense of smell. Only when Inuyasha came upon the scene of battle did she realize who the spider was fighting:

Sesshomaru was cutting the spider's body to pieces, but Naraku kept regenerating himself.

"You are supposed to be weakened and easy to take," the spider growled in anger.

Sesshomaru scoffed. "If you thought mating season would cripple my abilities, think again."

"How can you not be affected by the season?!"

Inuyasha kept out of the wind, observing the fight silently for a moment.

Sesshomaru's movements were still as deadly as ever, but she was a fraction less fast than she could be, and she kept her body slightly hunched. The difference was so imperceptible that someone like Naraku would never notice it; no, only someone who knew Sesshomaru closely, an experienced fighter who'd crossed swords with the demon lord for

years and years would notice.

Sesshomaru was affected by the mating season. But she was shrugging the effects off through sheer force of willpower, as if it were nothing but a minor nuisance, like her missing arm.

Inuyasha hated to admit it, but she was impressed.

* * *

><p>TBC...

17. Naraku traps Sesshomaru

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><p>The clashes continued and bits of Naraku's flesh scattered everywhere across the clearing. Inuyasha frowned. The scene was almost familiar. Where had she seen this before? What was Naraku planning, letting himself be cut up like this?<p>

And then it clicked.

"Sesshomaru, watch out!"

Too late. Inuyasha jumped into the open, just as a piece of writhing flesh shot forward to latch onto Sesshomaru's ankle. The rest followed, engulfing Sesshomaru's entire body, until only his head was sticking out from the mass of demon flesh.

"Inuyasha, how nice of you to join us. I did not know your sisterly feelings for Sesshomaru ran so deep."

The jab stung, but not enough for Inuyasha to do something reckless.

Naraku grinned, his monstrous face twisting, crossing well into the territory of lechery, as he then addressed the elder. "I had hoped that as a bitch you would submit to me more willingly, Sesshomaru, but I am prepared to take you by force."

Though Sesshomaru's expression remained calm, Inuyasha could tell she was angry by the glint in her eyes. She also knew by the subtle downturn of the corners of her mouth that Sesshomaru was more disturbed by Naraku than she was letting on. Inuyasha made no mistake in thinking that Sesshomaru was afraid of Naraku; rather, the Western Lord was disgusted by the spider's sudden lust for her female form.

"Filth," Sesshomaru growled. "Did you honestly think you could absorb this Sesshomaru? I distinctly remember what happened the last time you tried at Kagewaki's castle."

But Naraku only laughed. "You are an arrogant bitch, Sesshomaru. I never make the same mistake twice. I did not plan to absorb you this time."

And with that, his flesh punched its way through Sesshomaru's stomach.

* * *

><p>TBC...

18. Naraku wins

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><p>A shocked look crossed Sesshomaru's features.<p>

She had seen the flesh pieces flying towards her, and, rather than avoiding them, she had allowed herself to be wrapped in to make a point. She was not in any manner weaker or lesser than she had been as a male. She had broken out of Naraku's flesh traps when she'd been male, she could do it again as a female.

She had, however, not been expecting Naraku to attack her in this manner.

It awoke her to her greatest flaw. Naraku was right; she had indeed been arrogant in her assumptions. She had treated this life-and-death battle as a way to prove to the world that she had not changed. She had not taken the fight seriously enough.

Gritting her teeth, Sesshomaru gathered all her youki.

A hole in the stomach was nothing for a full demon like her. She would correct her mistake, and not allow for any more distractions.

A burst of energy destroyed the flesh trap that held her in place.

With another burst, she instantly healed the hole in her stomach through sheer force of willpower.

When she turned to face Naraku her eyes had flashed a blood red color.

"You...!" she growled.

But Naraku merely stepped back, smirking as he did so. "I already have what I came for, little mate," he calmly stated. "I will return for you later."

And with that, he fled from the clearing in a cloud of miasma just as Inuyasha's pack burst into the scene.

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><p>TBC...

19. I will find a cure

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><p>"I'm going back to the Jusenkyo springs," Sesshomaru declared. "I
will find a cure to this curse upon my person."

It was not that she was particularly upset by the fact that she had become female. The people who mattered to her had accepted her. Her subjects had returned to their grudging respect for and fear of her raw powers. Those that thought less of her or opposed her had been dealt with. Even the laws had been bent for her claim to the title of the Western Lord.

All in all, Sesshomaru would likely not have bothered to find a way to remove the curse, if not for one thing: the filthy way that Naraku had looked at her. It had felt more invasive and violating to her than the punch she had received through her stomach.

It was intolerable to Sesshomaru that the spider thought of her in such a disgusting manner. She did not even understand why he wanted her; he had never shown lust towards her when she had still been male, and she did not believe she had changed overly much in either behavior or appearance upon turning female. Why bother now?

It made no sense to her, but that didn't matter. What mattered was her decision to stop it and the manner in which she would achieve her goal. Naraku, for some reason, was lusting for her female form alone. Which meant that his disgusting looks would stop when she turned male again.

" Well, I'm finding the cure first," Inuyasha said.

So, they were back to being rivals. Sesshomaru almost rolled her eyes . Almost.

* * *

><p>TBC...<p>

20. Return to Jusenkyo

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><p>Sesshomaru, along with Inuyasha and her pack, headed to the lands across the sea that very same day. Though, Sesshomaru pretended to ignore most of what was going on among the mismatched pack, she could not help but be annoyed at the manner in which the pack members treated Inuyasha, as it reminded her exactly of the way she had been looked at by her own critics upon becoming female.<p>

It was true that Inuyasha was uncouth in her mannerisms, that her

hair was wild and untamed, and her claws badly needed to be polished... all of these things which the humans pointed out were things that Sesshomaru agreed with. They were not the things, however, that had Sesshomaru feeling irked. What bothered her was the fact that they had been most tolerant of those bad habits of Inuyasha when she had been male, and were only pointing them out to her now that she had become female.

It was hypocritical.

To be treated differently by others because one's reproductive system had changed... if it had been Sesshomaru... well, she had already shown the world what happened to those who thought her less than before. And there would be no mercy for Naraku either.

Listening to another round of arguments, Sesshomaru decided to speed up her pace.

This foolishness had to end. Both for her own sanity's sake as well as Inuyasha's. Not that she cared about the half-breed...

Soon enough, they had returned to the Jusenkyo where the unassuming guide was sitting about, as if he had already been awaiting their arrival.

"Welcome back to Jusenkyo," he greeted them.

* * *

><p>TBC...

21. Hot water

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><p>"You...!" Inuyasha stomped up to the guide and grabbed him by the front of his hanfu. "How the hell do I change back into a man!"<p>

"I think this should've been the first question for us to ask, when Inuyasha had been dunked into that spring," Miroku quipped, earning him a glare from Kagome.

"Why hadn't you thought of this sooner, Miroku?" she said. "It would've saved us a lot of trouble!"

"Uhm, well..."

Miroku let out a nervous laugh, which only served to make Sango angry as well.

"You must've been all too happy with Inuyasha as a girl, right?" she said with false sweetness. "The only man in our group, having all the girls to yourself... and Inuyasha is so gullible that you'd have no problems copping a feel from her without her ever noticing under the banner of brotherhood."

When all Miroku managed in response was a sheepish smile, Sango slammed her Hiraikotsu onto his head, knocking him out cold. "Pervert monk," she grumbled.

"Enough!"

The group stopped their antics when Sesshomaru called them to attention. The Western Lord was sending each of them an icy look.

"I want answers," she said. "I want them now."

The guide cleared his throat, pushing Inuyasha off of him. "You want cure for curse, yes? Don't want stay girl? Hot water change you back!"

Inuyasha blinked. "Hot water?" she said. "Wait. Was that why I returned to my old self at the hot springs?"

Sesshomaru send him a short glance. "You managed to change back?"

"Only for the night.," Inuyasha confessed. "I changed to a girl again the next morning."

"The next morning..." Sesshomaru frowned. "So, the cure is temporary?"

"Hot water cure last only until cold water come," the guide supplied helpfully.

This revelation made Inuyasha widen her eyes in sudden realization. "It was raining the next morning..." she whispered in shock.

Sesshomaru scowled. "Is there not a way to make the change permanent?"

"Only one." The guide lifted a single finger. "Old Musk Dynasty of China created Pail of Preservation. You must splash hot water on self from Pail. Then you will permanently lock into male form."

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><p>TBC...

22. Heat

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><p>They quickly set out to find the Pail of Preservation. But as they continued their journey, something odd came to Sesshomaru's attention.<p>

On their way to China, it had been mostly her, the most powerful female demon, who got attacked by lust-crazed male demons. She hadn't

thought much off it, as this had been a regular occurrence whenever she left the Western Fortress, ever since she became female. Besides, the lowlives weren't exactly difficult to dispatch; she disposed of the majority before Inuyasha's mismatched pack even got wind of them.

But they weren't attacking her anymore.

All of their attentions seemed to have moved on to Inuyasha. The pack realized the sudden interest in the half demon, and tried to change their routine accordingly, but Inuyasha was having none of it.

"I'm not going to walk in the middle!" she protested. "Those demons are all low level weaklings anyway, that's why they can't even control their baser instincts. I can take care of 'em instantly!"

"Inuyasha, come on," cried Kagome, "something is attracting them to you!"

"Feh, like I don't know it! It ain't a problem I can't handle; Tessaiga can kill a hundred in a single swing, remember?"

"But we should be cautious regardless," Miroku reasoned. "We don't know what is causing this."

"Actually," Sesshomaru said, as she delicately sniffed the air, "I think we do." Inuyasha's pack gave her an expectant look, but she turned her attention on her sibling instead, feeling smug. "You're bleeding."

Kagome quickly rounded on the half breed. "You're injured!?" she cried out in worry. "Why didn't you say anything?"

Inuyasha blushed. "Uhm... I'm not injured Kagome..."

"You smell strange," commented Shippo, who had come to sit on Inuyasha's shoulder, and was sniffing her neck. "Kinda sweet and spicy."

"Wait..." said Sango, and Sesshomaru could tell that she had realized what was going on. "It's mating season for demons, isn't it? Inuyasha, are you in heat?"

Inuyasha crossed her arms defiantly. "Feh, what if I am?"

* * *

><p>TBC...

23. (Not) the same thing

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><p>Another round of bickering soon erupted from the group.<p>

"It's just a damn heat, you guys, It's not like I can't swing my sword anymore!" Inuyasha shouted towards his pack mates.

"But Sango said you're not feeling well," Kagome argued.

"There've been plenty of times I wasn't feeling well; when I was poisoned, when I was injured," Inuyasha pointed out. "I still fought!"

"But-!"

"Besides, Sango still fights when she's having her monthly bleeding! I can smell it you know!"

Sango blushed. "Ah, yes," she admitted, "but a human's menstrual bleeding is not the same as the bleeding of a dog demon in heat."

"Still part of the reproductive cycle," Inuyasha stubbornly continued.

"The sooner we find the Pail, the sooner her heat will stop," said Sesshomaru. "We should go."

"Why aren't you affected by this?" Miroku piped up beside the lord.

Sesshomaru spared the monk a sideways glance. "I _was. _But the beginnings of heat came to an abrupt end after my encounter with Naraku." A slight frown marred Sesshomaru's features. "I don't know how it happened, or why it stopped, but I think that vermin did something to me. A heat does not simply abort itself like that."

"What do you suspect he did?"

"I don't know... but it can't be anything good."

In the end, Inuyasha got her way. She was allowed to continue the quest, and she did not have to be positioned in the protective center of the pack. But she was forced to take a bath in a nearby spring to wash her heat scent off as thoroughly as possible, and she was made to use Kagome's futuristic tampons to keep her scent from spreading too heavily, which she, surprisingly, conceded to without complaint.

It took them the entire mating season, but they found the Pail of Preservation in a city that was build high up in the mountains.

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><p>TBC...

24. The Pot of Liberation

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><p>The Pail of Preservation was kept at an old shrine. An elderly monk, who had welcomed the ragtag group, had laughed heartily, however, when they had told him the reason why they needed the Pail.<p>

"The Musk Dynasty guards its secrets well," said the monk, "even the guide of Jusenkyo knows not the workings of our treasures. I regret to inform you that the Pail will not return you to your male form."

The old man then launched into a long tale about the Musk Dynasty line of martial artists.

While the rest of the group listened without a blink of an eye, Kagome was disgusted to learn that the men of the Musk Dynasty used the Pail to turn animals into women in order to mate with them.

"It is a practice that has gone out of use now," the monk assured, much to Kagome's relief.

"How do we free ourselves from our curse then?" Sesshomaru demanded.

"Ah, to free yourself from the curse, you only need to pour hot water over yourself from the Pot of Liberation. Our shrine will gift this Pot to our esteemed guests from far on one condition." The monk held up his forefinger for emphasis. "There is a village called N  ji   in China, whose women, the Joketsuzoku, will only marry a man who has defeated them. Our great Herb the First plans to wed one such Joketsuzoku, but he has been unable to find the village. We would like for you to bring one of their women here."

"Pah," Inuyasha huffed, "I guess we have no choice."

* * *

><p>TBC...

25. Village of Joketsuzoku

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><p>They found the Joketsuzoku quickly enough, and Inuyasha wondered if perhaps this guy, Herb the First, was an incompetent guy with a very bad sense of direction. The village was situated right next to the Jusenkyo springs!<p>

At the village the group found that there was a martial arts tournament going on in full motion. After some inquiry they came to know that the tournament was held for the sake of a young woman, who was looking to get married.

"I'm gonna enter this tournament," said Inuyasha, "I'll win this thing, and then that girl will come with us back to Herb. We'll get the Pot of Liberation, break our curse, and everything will be back

to normal."

"Do as you please," Sesshomaru stated nonchalantly.

"Keh, I will €" even if you tell me not to."

Inuyasha jumped up the stage and took position.

* * *

><p>TBC...

26. A new enemy

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><p>"WÇ'... nÇ•..." the girl uttered.

She was shaking, Sesshomaru noticed. And she smelled...
angry.

"Wh-what? What did I do?" Inuyasha fidgeted uncomfortably as she
stared at the furious soon-to-be bride, whom she'd just beaten in the
tournament. Obviously, she'd done something to upset her.

"WÇ' shÄ• nÇ•!"

"Uh... doesn't that mean 'I kill you' in Chinese?" Kagome asked.

"I think we'd best go quietly..." Miroku pointed out.

They ran back to the mountain city of the Musk Dynasty with the girl
pursuing them hot on their heels. That was how they delivered her to
Herb the First.

They never did find out that it was tradition for the Joketsuzoku to
marry the men who defeated them in battle and to kill the women who
did the same.

* * *

><p>TBC...

27. A girl no more

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><p>"Look, just hurry up and give us the cure before she wakes up!"
Inuyasha grumbled.<p>

In the end, Miroku had knocked the girl out from behind with his
staff to stop her from killing the half-demon.

"Ah, yes, of course!" said Herb the First. He snapped his fingers once, and the elderly monk who had greeted them first upon arriving at the mountain city went to do his bidding.

Surprisingly, Herb had turned out to be the pretty boy type. He had long flowing hair tied up in a neat ponytail, and Sesshomaru could smell a very subtle hint of dragon in his scent. Although the blood had been so diluted that Herb was a human for all intents and purposes, Sesshomaru could tell that in a distant past this boy's ancestor must have used the Pail of Preservation to take a dragon for a wife.

The monk came back with the Pot of Liberation.

"It is yours," he said. "It is already filled with hot water."

"Thank you," said Kagome.

They took the Pot; and Herb and the monk left the ragtag group to their own privacy.

When Inuyasha finally returned to his former self, relief swept over him in waves.

But when Sesshomaru also returned to being a man again, he did not feel the same way. He felt anger. And a hint of fear. Finally, he knew what Naraku had done to his body.

* * *

><p>TBC...

28. Sesshomaru is pushed over the edge

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><p>"Sesshomaru?!"<p>

He saw his own red eyes reflected in the gleam of his brother's golden gaze.

Of course he hadn't noticed before. He had been female. After a mating season that would have been a natural state of her body.

He plunged his claws into his stomach, sending a wave of miasma into the room.

Now he was male again, and what had been natural before, now felt like an invasion of his being.

"What are you doing?!" the miko cried out in a panic.

He tried to penetrate his claws deeper, but in that moment Naraku's signature barrier erected itself around the foreign creature in his

stomach.

"You really think I'll let you kill it that easily, little mate?"

Naraku's disembodied voice carried through the room like an ominous choir.

"Naraku!" Inuyasha yelled. "What the hell did you do to Sesshomaru!?"

Naraku's voice laughed with smug satisfaction. "My offspring will have the blood of one of the strongest demons in existence flowing through its veins. Sesshomaru, how does it feel to receive the honor of carrying my child?"

"I would rather die!" Seshomaru growled.

"No, you won't. The child is innocent, after all. As its mother, you will come to love it and protect it. Just like any bitch loves and protects its own pup. You can't ignore your maternal instincts."

"For any other pup, perhaps," Sesshomaru retorted, "except yours!"

And with that said, he released his poison from his claws into his own body.

* * *

><p>TBC...

End
file.